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THE RIGHT TO LABOR.

IN social life, men are aware of an evil long before they can define its causes or indicate its remedies. A correct diagnosis is a first step towards a cure. This confusion of thought overtakes us all, and especially the masses of men. In the darkness one may recognize the presence of an enemy, and yet, striking at random, may be injured by his own blows. The depressed classes confronted by difficulties too great for their strength, and finding the attitude of society towards them one of indifference and of hostility, may sullenly affirm, "The world owes me a living." The neglect and oppressions they suffer seem monstrous to them, and the claim they assert to be a real and urgent one. Yet they fail to understand its import, how the existing state has arisen, and where the obligation of redress attaches. The familiar phrase hints vaguely at the wrong, but may as easily become the occasion of still farther wrong as provide the needed remedy. The world owes them a living, but not in the form in which they fancy.

The relations of men to society are various; and, because of this diversity, each relation, looked at singly, may be more or less confounded with other relations. When society has occasion for service, men are in no way equally fitted to render it, and immediately there is occasion for selection. Society should have the best service, and those who can render it have a just precedence. At this point the doctrine of equality is without application, and choice takes its place.

When the ultimate units of society are under consideration, the relation is very different. Every man has large stakes in society,—stakes that constitute for him

his all. It is much simpler, and ultimately more just, to express these interests under their personal form, regarding each man as a unit, than it is to let in differences between man and man, to assign values incapable of determination and sure to become simply a measure of force. The predominant personal element is allowed to assert itself, as in co-operation or in democracy. The man is accepted as the political unit; and we assert an equality in civic relations which we have theoretical difficulties in expounding, but great practical ease in applying. No class can be excluded from judicial rights; and, if any class is excluded from political rights, it must be because these rights share also the nature of a service which all are not prepared to render. When inequality reaches these fundamental relations, those subject to it cease to be full constituents of society.

When we come to the depressed classes, the case is still different. Circumstances or native endowments or personal delinquencies have so wrought against them that they are not able to maintain an individual footing under equal civic privileges and common economic opportunities. Society is constantly called on to do something more for them, worsted in the battle of life, than for other classes,—to restore the equilibrium which is constantly slipping from them. If this is not done, the advantages which the more enterprising and able secure become permanent, and the paths of progress from below upward become increasingly difficult. At this point the assertion gains meaning,—“The world owes me a living.” The fortunate ones have so stolen a march, have so won the inside track, that the equality of opportunity has been lost. New adjustments are to be made, suited to the actual balance of powers. To plead an equality which never did exist or which has quite passed away is to put off the poor with words,—words that have become stones,

not bread. When the man out of employment, and with no power to secure it, says, "The world owes me a living," he may mean, I am at liberty to prey upon society, since society preys upon me, or he may mean: it is the duty of society to readjust the terms of life in my favor, to make bearable the burden that I have to bear. By my very presence in the world I am a term in society, and must have a footing granted which I can hold. The ambiguity of the claim, "The world owes me a living," is a portion of its fascination. The claimant catches sight both of its admissibility and inadmissibility, of a right of concession and a hint of violence.

The well-to-do, in denying this plea, may be acting under the hard, arrogant temper, "My own is my own for all purposes"; or they may entertain the kinder feeling that the demand is made in a temper subversive of society. The two parties, if they are to find reconciliation, must meet each other under the idea that social duties are not exhausted by the notion of equality as once established, but that this equality must be renewed and cherished by many concessions not contained in the primitive compact. There is a sense in which every man can claim a living, a feasible way into life; and his own obligations take effect only in connection with a possible benefit of society to him. It is only at this point of concurrent social action that the two parties which have fallen into hostility can find reconciliation. Mutual rights and duties grow out of agreement.

A case similar to this, and with a like confusion of thought, has arisen in the industrial world under the assertion, "Every man has the right to labor." That rights of a special and indefeasible form attach to labor is destined to be a great economic and social disclosure. Contracts express the terms of reciprocal power on which men stand with each other. Mutual claims and conces-

sions are expressed in them. The frequency with which contracts are formed, their explicitness and binding power, indicate diffusion of rights and equality of privileges. A class that makes no contracts is either a ruling or a subject class. A contract stands for mutual power. The civil law accepts the enforcement of contracts as a primary duty.

Permanent and important relations between men are assumed by written contracts, and some of them by contracts which require public record. Verbal contracts indicate slighter and more transient connections,—connections with few reciprocal obligations. A verbal understanding indicates that the parties to it are acting under some general custom which needs no explanation, confers but few rights, and can readily be dissolved. Those whose entire lives rest on implied or verbal agreements lie, like empty bubbles, on the surface of industrial activity,—rise, disappear, and are replaced by a tide whose movements they in no way control. They do not enter into governing forces. Their services simply fall to them, and fall away from them, as occasion offers. Their rights are of the simplest character, and are incapable of enforcement beyond narrow limits.

The great mass of laborers have hitherto fallen below the region of contract. Their opportunities for labor have come with as little definite sequence, as little mastery over the conditions of life, as the foam that springs out of the sea and is gathered or scattered by the winds. If inventive power goes with labor, the workman may begin to make terms with his employer, or, if the service rendered is of a professional character, a tendency to establish periods of employment appears, and dismissal becomes less arbitrary. The great mass of workmen are left under verbal agreements of the simplest kind, and are constantly open to the vicissitudes of change. When we consider how large a portion of any industrial

community laborers constitute, how slight a control they exercise over the forms and degrees of industry, how weak a social element they are under existing methods, we cannot fail to see that a primary and essential constituent in the economic world is treated as if it were a negligible factor. Society cannot be broadly or deeply organized under such a system, nor can productive power approach its maximum. The prizes of life and the toils of life fall apart, and there is no free circulation of motives.

When a community clings to this state of things, it is accepting, under the blinding force of conventional sentiment, an unfortunate and transient relation as a permanent framework of order. An assertion of a right to labor indicates that some, at least, are beginning to feel the incongruity, the disproportion of power, between essential parts of society. Our own time has brought out this conflict of rights which lurks in the freedom of management and bondage of labor. It begins to be seen that sagacity and leadership can, advantageously, have no absolute authority conceded to them, any more than supreme rule can be granted to chiefs, kings, and emperors. The democratic idea comes to the surface once more; and we feel again, as we have felt before, that men must be allowed claims in connection with what they have to do. The slavery of an industrial world, ordered by a few in their own interest, becomes as real, and at times as severe, as enforced labor. The industrial world is making a stand against tyranny, talks about duties and rights, and struggles to define and defend mutual obligations.

In this phase of development we encounter, as elsewhere, profound difficulties. The power which falls to leadership, when leadership first arises, is always excessive, whether we are dealing with the political or the economic or the intellectual or the spiritual world. In all these directions it is a primary consideration to secure leadership.

Till this is attained, nothing effectual can be done. The moment, however, it appears, the second difficulty arises,—of putting upon it suitable limitations. The most controlling relation in the economic world is that between those who lead in industry and those who are led, between the employer and the employee. These two together are the active producing agents, and neither has power independently of the other. Management is impotent without labor, and labor is futile without management. An agreement between them by which concordant and concurrent action is secured lies at the foundation of universal and permanent prosperity. If a contract is in order, it is very much in order.

The reason why this field has been left so destitute of terms of agreement has been because the immediate advantages of management have been so superior to those of labor as to enable it easily to claim the foreground. There has not been sufficient reserved power in labor to force a contract. The employer is content to proceed without an agreement, as control is already in his hands; and the workman is pressed by so many necessities, so driven by competition, that he cannot stop to bargain about the future. Sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof. The obvious reason of this predominance of power resting with the employer is the scarcity of employers and the abundance of laborers. The numerical relation between the two parties is unfavorable to a discussion of terms, and tends to become more and more so. The employer must have labor, and the laborer must have employment; but the equality of the need is at once overshadowed by the fewness of those who appear on the one side and the number of those who offer themselves on the other side. The intrinsic equality of claims is lost sight of in the self-contained attitude of the one party and the urgent necessities of the other. Commer-

cial development rapidly increases this inequality. Management is constantly concentrated. Employers become fewer and fewer in reference to employees. Even without formal agreement, they adopt one policy in reference to labor, the policy of repression. In earlier periods, when the employers were more numerous, less separate from laborers, more distinct in methods and less frequent in consultation, the employee could more readily alter his engagements, and find refuge from the hard temper of one man in the easy ways of another. His individuality went for more, and personal ties retained some strength. Even then he was a dependent, but dependence counted for something. Now we have scarcely more than a sum in remainders, and a sum that is often thrust aside by an imperious temper and the feeling that no loss is so great as the loss of power. The workman thus has found himself more and more adrift, more and more subject to the accidents of production and the caprice of employers, because individually he could not command a contract, and he has not been accustomed to collective action. He has been as needful to the community as the manager, but he has had no way of making that need felt. The community had been gaining integration; but he had been left out as in a measure superfluous, with constant waste and injury. This is the fundamental fact in the labor question, the only one in connection with which the right to labor can be intelligently asserted. The right lies between employer and employee. The accidents which have obscured this right are to be forced back, and the mutual obligations are to be allowed to emerge. We have had extreme combination on the one side and but little combination on the other, till we have lost all sense of the real balance of claims between the two parties.

The laborer, acting alone, can offer no effectual resistance to the employer when he undertakes to force down

wages. If he refuses to accept lower pay, he is dismissed and another laborer is called out of the crowded market to take his place. The new man may be inferior, and probably is inferior, to the one he displaces. That is not material. He subserves the present purpose. Wages are reduced, and after a little the better workman will find his way back at the lower rates. The diligent, enterprising man does not settle wages, not even his own wages, but the class next inferior. This process is renewed as often as the employer thinks it worth while; and the laborer is kept in a dependent, timid attitude which incapacitates him to use even the power of resistance which still remains to him.

The social and economic movement is thus, as far as the workman is concerned, the exact reverse of what it should be. Inferior skill, inferior thrift, inferior productive temper, rule the market. The moment the laborer attempts to force an advance, the man below is called in, and the effort is made futile. To this retreat there is no limit but that of bare subsistence. The momentary equilibrium is not final. It may again be disturbed, and re-established at a lower point. This has led economists to say that there is no measure to the depression of wages, that they are constantly sinking to the line below which life is impossible. That they are not more rapidly pushed to this extreme is due to the good will and the inertia of the employer. Thus the workman, no matter what his personal quality, is without any secure footing. His prudence avails him nothing; and the price of his labor is determined by the class to which he belongs, not in anxious and thoughtful action, but in stolid contentment on the part of its most indifferent members. In England, where the system has been partially corrected, the industrious workman who lives beyond sixty-five is liable to come on the rates. This state of things is most distress-

ing in its effect on the laborer. What is its effect on the manager?

The manager has the most unrestrained control of business, with the least possible responsibility to the employee and to the community at large. If profits are abundant, he has no scruples about appropriating them, and is reluctant to raise wages. He is content that wages should remain subject to the economic law of supply and demand, scarcely raising the question whether the law is in suspension or in operation. The demand for labor is slow in taking effect. Time is consumed in transferring profits into capital, and capital into new plants. The present remainder of unemployed, or partially employed, labor must be reabsorbed before the demand, in an efficient form, reaches those already occupied; and, when it does arrive, there are many personal embarrassments in a change of employers. By the time all these delays are exhausted, a reaction is likely to set in, and the demand settle again to the old standard. A moderate tide rises and falls in the labor market, but its force is expended in floating about loose material.

Any pressure in profits, on the other hand, makes itself felt at once in wages. If competition is severe, if the wishes of the employer, eager for wealth, are not being met, he looks about for some reduction of expenses. The economy with which he is most familiar and which promises most immediate relief is a diminution of wages. This is the line of least resistance. In any other direction he encounters capitalists who are prepared for vigorous contention over the price of their products. The workman alone has no measure of price and no power to sustain the current price. Some one is always waiting to underbid him. Hence the employer proceeds to throw the disaster of failure on the workmen, regarding it as an expression of good will that he does not dismiss him alto-

gether. Under the system of uncombined labor each man drops helplessly into the position which falls to him. Resistance is reduced to its lowest terms. Both employer and employee look upon these fatalities as something unavoidable. Not only can the workman plead no rights, his mind comes to be destitute of the very notion of rights. This movement being regarded as inevitable, it ceases to be studied for the means of correction.

It is not strange that the employer, familiar with this method and this method only, should come to think of the business of the world as exclusively his own, and should avail himself at once of all its immunities and all its advantages. When wealth has been in the most rapid process of accumulation, management has been most cruel. The extreme toil of children and the degrading labor of women, in the early development of productive power, are proofs of this temper. Individual rights, and the rights of the race to strength and perpetuity, were trampled under foot. The same tendency, under similar conditions, is reasserting itself at the South. Management entering new territory, like the Sandwich Islands or the Philippines, is anxious to avail itself of some form of coolie labor. The gold region in South Africa is disturbed by the reluctance of labor to perform the tasks assigned it, and is anxious to secure some form of coercion. The condition of the laborer and his wishes hardly enter into the calculation.

Not far from Williamstown a village was suddenly built up around a new plant. The commodity produced fell shortly under the control of a trust, and the factory was discontinued. A heavy and irretrievable loss was left to fall on those who, trusting to the indication of capital, had built houses or shops or stores. The boat is capsized, the officers save themselves, and leave the crew and passengers to make what shift they can.

By the means of bankrupt laws the responsibility of management to the community has been still farther reduced, and a reckless temper given a free hand. The result is that the annual liabilities from failure vibrate about \$250,000,000. We at times lay great stress on the losses by strikes, and certainly these losses indicate a great want of wisdom on our part; but the responsibility for them lies between the parties to them, according to their respective faults. They are not to be charged on labor exclusively, unless it has ceased to be a virtue to establish and maintain rights. In these struggles the most severe, indeed the only severe, suffering, no matter what may be the merits of the case, are sure to fall on the workmen. In the failures of management the losses are scattered widely through the community, and the manager may even escape with gains. We take but little account of these ever-returning evils of rash management, we are so familiar with them.

If we add to these failures the losses incident to financial crises, which have occurred with such regularity in the business world, and have been the product of the speculative and self-reliant temper; if we remember the disasters incident to an unsound currency, and anticipate the dispersion of industrial centres and the general decay of incentive which are sure to attend on the vigorous efforts of a few to govern the commercial world,—we shall see that the rule of business men has not been altogether successful, and that a wider concurrence of interests might have given us more complete and more uniform prosperity. It is plain that the results of undivided and irresponsible power in business have not been fortunate, whether we look at the restless, speculative, and unsympathetic temper of management, or at the disasters which it scatters in the community, or at the overtopping claims and oppressive wealth to which it gives rise in the form of trusts.

With workmen kept in a dependent position the transition is not far nor difficult to a neglect of all interests save those which the manager has under immediate consideration. Special protection, special franchises, a special control of the instruments of commerce, enhanced by extended combination, at length give a monopoly of advantages which threatens the overthrow of all equality of rights in the economic world. It has been justly said that the combination of workmen is the first line of defence against the march of a tyrannical few towards a commercial conquest of the world. We may well recognize the social value of this movement of workmen to establish for themselves an economic footing, and to secure a real partnership in the wealth-creating processes.

Here lies the bottom principle in the entire discussion. Shall society be organized under the leadership of a few, primarily for their own benefit, or shall it be deeply, increasingly, organized through its entire membership for the profiting of all? Is there any kingdom of heaven possible, or is there not? Does every movement in civilization issue in wider and wider spaces between those who rise to the top and those who sink to the bottom, while morality and religion are only spasmodic efforts to shake together oil and water that begin at once to separate again? Is democracy a mere cobweb that glitters in the morning light, but stays no man's steps? We have one answer for all these questions. The spiritual heavens have the same breadth of service as the physical heavens, that dissipate noxious vapors, that absorb moisture and return it as showers, that yield the elements of every form of life, that receive light and scatter it to the world's end, that are translucent with the revelation of the entire cosmos.

An essential step in the organic growth of the community is the combination of labor. Singly, the employee

can make no terms with the employer. He is easily pushed from the shore, like a spent swimmer. When workmen stand together, in recognition of the fact that labor is a primary constituent in all production, they have a position from which they can make a contract with capital in defence of mutual rights. The great advantage of capital at the present time gets expression in the ease with which it combines. A like facility of collective movement on the part of labor will restore the equilibrium between the formally opposed but fundamentally united parties in production. Claims, reasonable and capable of enforcement, will appear on the side of labor. The right to labor will become formulated, and recognized directions and limits of activity will take the place of the caprice of a few. Organic dependencies will be established, profitable to both parties and to the entire community.

The limit of business activity is bankruptcy: the limit of labor is bare subsistence. A minimum wage would arrest both forms of decay at an earlier stage. A minimum wage leaves the ordinary standards of life unassailed. The workman may as well stop while life is endurable as be compelled to stop when it has become unendurable. The recovery from the one position is effected more speedily and with less loss than from the other. Overproduction has gone farther, the price of commodities has fallen lower, when the downward movement has been left to complete itself at the expense of the laborer. The rallying process becomes painful and partial. The standard of life is reduced, and the workman lapses into stolidity, as one who bears burdens he cannot lighten. Civilization thus becomes a crushing weight. The working classes are fittingly spoken of as mudsills, since they are pressed deeper and deeper into the mire as the superincumbent mass increases.

But it will be thought we have not touched the real difficulty. The present untoward results are not voluntary, nor can any good-will much alter them. They are contained in social and economic laws. To struggle against these laws is futile. The primary source of the trouble is an overcrowded labor-market. Yet the weakness which is incident to numbers makes itself felt through separate action. Barbarians are easily defeated because they are not trained to act together. Let workmen take thoughtful and deliberate counsel, and the labor-market will take on a new appearance. It is not the mere fact of numbers which occasions the difficulty, any more than it is the swarm of savages that occasions the slaughter. England two centuries ago had but one-sixth of its present population, and hardly more than one-sixth of its present comforts. Ireland, with a declining population, has been easily outstripped by England, with an increasing population. We are still far off from the limits of the world's productive power. We are not hampered by these limits, but by the ill-advised, conflicting way in which we work within them. As long as we allow the disasters of our productive life to fall on one class, and its gains to accrue to another, we shall have extreme poverty; and extreme poverty begets and rebegets itself.

The heedless scramble of a few for a first position, by which many are thrown down and trampled under foot, is seen in the manner in which machinery has frequently been introduced. Machinery ultimately becomes a gain to all, but it also imposes immediate losses. These have been allowed to fall heavily upon the laborer, and have been ordered at times with the express intention of reducing wages. So also the accidents which inevitably accompany the use of machinery have been left as the inheritance of labor. They are properly the burden of the community. Those wounded in the industrial ranks

are entitled to as much consideration as those who have borne the brunt of battle. Why should the fatalities which attend on railroad labor rest so exclusively on the employee?

There are two opposite tendencies in society, an upward and a downward one: each perpetuates itself. The method with which we are most familiar is that of decay. We force down wages: we thereby limit consumption, and this reduces production. Even machinery, though it throws out labor, by increasing production reabsorbs it again. As long as production expands and the rewards of production multiply in the hands of workmen, we shall have growth, and a thoroughly self-sustaining growth. The methods, on the other hand, which reduce wages and enlarge profits work disastrously at both extremities. Productive consumption is decreased here, and wasteful consumption increased there. The community carries many who make no adequate return. Wise production has ample power, and ever-increasing power, to nourish itself.

There is sound philosophy in the workman's assertion: "We are bound to have families. We are bound to make suitable provision for them. Malthus be damned." The old economic doctrine proceeded on the ground that laborers would act without foresight, and thus sink to the bottom. We have ordered the relations of classes in such a way as to make foresight ineffective, and so in a measure have fulfilled the prediction. There are not two distinct sorts of men in the world,—one sort that responds to motives and one that does not. All men respond to inducements. The chief difference between classes is found in their opportunities. When workmen are in the very act of combination for the express purpose of enhancing motives, it does not behoove us to bring against them that old accusation of an irredeemable carelessness.

Fatalism as a faith begets fatalism as a fact. Even John Bright could regard all laws in regulation of factory labor as a great mistake, fitted to dam up and divert natural forces. Yet some of the best results of the past century have been found in these laws. Employers find no difficulty in securing conditions which depress labor. Why should they find more difficulty in accepting conditions which help labor? They have had no doubt as to the effect on wages, and on the independence of workmen, of flooding factories and shops and mines with foreign workmen, who have endured all the disaster of a bad system and can be made the instruments of its propagation. If wages can be pushed downward by one set of influences, they can as certainly be pushed upward by another.

In pursuing his purposes by the legitimate means of combination, a method which is the secret of civilization, the workman has made some mistakes. This was unavoidable, and has been due partly to his own lack of experience and partly to the unreasonable opposition he has encountered. It is said that he has lost interest in labor, and in many ways retards its speedy accomplishment. There was a time when personal fidelity was relied on as a spur to exertion; but that time has passed by, chiefly through the force of circumstances. Little intercourse or good will lies between the large employer and his help. Fair and mutual gains must take the place of attachment. When the manager complains that the workman, in times of great activity, is apathetic and refuses to hustle, that he assigns tasks, rejects overwork, and dislikes piece-work, that he keeps down the number of apprentices, he should remember that unusual activity has been urged as a means of increasing profits, with no direct or certain bearing on wages. If wages and profits were bound to each other by suitable contract, the case would be greatly altered. The laborer wishes to unite his labor to his own welfare,

and he holds back as a means of securing this object. The fundamental idea of a trade union is that workmen shall act together, making common cause in the pursuit of their mutual welfare. The employer, on the other hand, desires in every way to break up this combined action. The agents of it are very distasteful to him. If he can stam-pede workmen, break their ranks, and lead the more enterprising to desert their fellows, the old relations will reappear, and he will shortly command the situation. The phalanx is broken, and slaughter commences. The workman must espouse the cause of every workman, or the weaker ones drop from the ranks and are ready, when any struggle arises, to consult their own advantage. The very movement in which he is engaged compels the workman to make all the interests of labor his own. The equalizing tendency must be allowed to prevail, till some just and admissible discriminations as to skill become possible. These cannot be established in the presence of the enemy, when deliberation is taken for weakness and leads to division. If the two parties could be brought to a peaceable parley, claims and classes might be established, and each person be protected according to the volume of his power, the sluggish not driven by the active, nor the active restrained by the sluggish. This complete adjustment is impossible till both employer and employee are willing to come to terms by means of it.

The labor movement has been the occasion of able, sustained, and fair-minded leadership. If conference is welcome, and real grievances are pointed out, the workman will not be the last to correct them. The superiority of leadership and of reasonableness in advancing claims was very manifest in the coal strike. The workmen, pressed by immediate and urgent wants, are bound over to a patient and moderate temper. This is illustrated in regrettable violence. Notwithstanding the brute force

and violent passion which are sure to be present in the ranks of workmen, notwithstanding the degree to which they are hampered in the use of legal and peaceable means, trade unions are arraying themselves more and more on the side of law, and making a quiet appeal to their fellow-citizens. We are to remember that the community at large is not an impartial tribunal in labor disputes. The average citizen is unduly inclined to the existing order. The laws and courts have been built up about it. Wealth governs our daily affairs. Most persons have at least a little to do with labor, and it is not inconvenient to find it pliable. Many near and remote advantages depend on the present relations of employer and employee. Any serious modification of them seems ready to topple down the economic structure and put confusion and anarchy in its place. Justice, urged by a single class in an unusual direction, encounters great obstacles in making its plea.

The workman, pressed by so hard a struggle, does not find himself at liberty to recognize at once every just claim urged upon him. It must take its position with reciprocal claims which he himself advances. He may not be willing that trade unions should be incorporated, as he thereby exposes joint funds to the inroads of the enemy. In restoring the balance of accountability, and in making the contracts into which he wishes to enter enforceable, incorporation is desirable. But the workman cannot afford to throw away any immunity which his poverty gives him till just and accessible tribunals are established, and the wealth of his antagonist no longer controls legal procedure. Existing courts are schooled in the rights of property, and hold in light esteem the personal rights of the laborer. They are slow, difficult of access, and costly in the remedies they offer, and place the two parties in a labor dispute on very unequal terms. They annul by injunctions the remedies of the workman, and put no other remedies

in their place. When just and fitting tribunals are established, the attitude of the workman will be altered. On the whole, the patience, forbearance, and perseverance which trade unions have shown in England constitute a most encouraging chapter in human history. Some reaction is showing itself in the decision that claims hold against trade unions without an act of incorporation, and in a closer restriction of boycotts; but these look not so much to retreat as to a permanent readjustment of relations in the interests of both parties. In America the arrogant claims of capital, its sense of being the all-sufficient and only sufficient agent of production, the degree in which we stand dazed by the parade of commercial power, the contempt we entertain for a principle developed in far-off Australia, have made us dislike the labor movement, and think lightly of the new rights which it implies.

We are ready to assume that the right to labor gets expression in the "scab," and the denial of that right in the trade union. The exact reverse would seem to be the truth. The entire contention of the union is to secure a social status, the power to form and enforce suitable contracts as safeguards of labor, thereby putting the rights of labor beyond the caprice of the employer. This safety of labor depends exclusively on the trade union. If it succeeds, the fitting terms of such contracts will be slowly determined. If it fails, all the claims of labor will fail with it. All the rights of labor lie for discussion and determination between the employer and the employee. It is the unsatisfactory character of this relation that is the ground of controversy. The employer so well understands this that his bitterest hostility is directed against the union and any extension of the union that serves to give it more power. He frequently anticipates all discussion of claims by a flat refusal to recognize the organ-

ization through which they come. He will deal with workmen separately, or, if not that, with his own workmen separately. He undertakes to determine the ways in which workmen shall consolidate their power. The "scab" is the resource of the employer in breaking down workmen, and in this connection he begins to talk of the right to labor. Yet the scab has no right to labor conceded him by the manager. The scab is taken on and dismissed as suits his own convenience, and this solely that his own power in dealing with the laborer may be unrestrained. The scab makes and enforces no contract. He is present that no contracts may be made and enforced. The scab lends himself to the tyranny of the employer, and secures in return only a brief period of employment. When a new equilibrium and a lower equilibrium shall have been established, he, having done what mischief he was able to do, falls back to his old position of waiting for farther trouble. Between the scab and the unionist no rights are to be gained. The unionist held his own job, and had not yielded it. The scab steps in to oust him under conditions inimical to the entire class of laborers. The cry of the right to labor made in behalf of the scab is a misleading cry, designed to divert attention from the true issue. His own chances of labor are in no way interfered with. If the scab succeeds, he throws some one else out of labor, and cripples labor in its entire extent. It is this fact that is the ground of detestation in which he is held.

The intelligent non-union laborer, directly involved in a strike, frequently recognizes this dependence of interests in employees, and makes common cause with the union. It is the soundness of the underlying principle which has sustained trade unions, and carried them forward in face of the opposition of employers, of the indifference of the community, and of the majority of their own class.

In a discussion of this question with a judge of a United States court he remarked, "If a man was willing to work and an employer was willing to have him work, he did not see why those facts did not settle the question." They do settle the question so far as existing law is concerned, and open the question so far as a fitting relation of productive classes is concerned. The settlement assumes that workmen can make and enforce no contract, that they are subject to the will of the employer and beyond the protection of the law. If a contractor, under an agreement to put up a building, should, in the progress of the work, find himself at disagreement with his employer as to the interpretation of certain specifications in the contract, it would not be in order for the latter to say, "There is a man ready to take up and complete the work as I wish it to be done: all you have to do is to stand out of the way." "Not in the least," would be the response. "I have put myself to expense, I have declined other work, and, moreover, I expect to make something out of the job. The difference in the rendering of the contract must be adjusted, and I must proceed."

In the case of the laborer he is first robbed of the power to make a contract, and then robbed of his opportunities because he has no contract. The thing under contention is the power of contract and the rights which go with it. The law and the administration of the law and the action of the "scab" under the law, when they oppose themselves to a fundamental right in a great class, are one and all hostile to democratic society. We can secure no organic completeness in society till every part ministers to every other part in reciprocal advantages. It is on this claim that the rights of labor rest.

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